

St Edward the Confessor, Scarborough

Avenue Victoria, Scarborough



Part 1: Core data

1.1 Listed grade: *Not listed*

1.2 Conservation area: *Scarborough Conservation Area*

1.3 Architect: *John Petch & Son*

1.4 Date(s): *1912-14*

1.5 Date of visit: *9 October 2007*

1.6 Name of report author: *Nicholas Antram*

1.7 Name of parish priest and/or contact(s) made on site: *Very Rev John Loughlin*

1.8 Associated buildings: *adjoining church hall (1987), presbytery (lived in by retired priest)*

1.9 Bibliographic references:

Middlesbrough Diocesan Yearbook 2007

Carson, Robert: *The First 100 Years – A History of the Diocese of Middlesbrough 1878-1978*

Minskip, Dominic: *A History of St Peter's Mission, Scarborough (1783 to the present) 1989*

Pevsner, N. & Neave, D.: *The Buildings of England, Yorkshire: York and the East Riding*, Penguin Books 1995

Part 2: Analysis

2.1 Statement of Importance

A pleasing church in the Byzantine style, somewhat quirky and curious in this comfortable Victorian suburb, and forming an attractive townscape feature.

2.2 Historical background

With the growth of the town of Scarborough came the foundation from St Peter's of chapels-of-ease, the first of which was St Edward the Confessor on the South Cliff. Negotiations to buy land there were underway in 1891 but subsequently Elizabeth Reynard of Sunderlandwick (near Driffield), who died at Scarborough in that year, gave the land and a legacy for the building of a church. The money was invested and nothing done about building a church until 1911 or 1912 when a Mr Anderson of York offered a donation of £1,000 if the building was begun at once. The foundation stone for St Edward the Confessor's church was laid on August 13, 1912, and the church opened in 1914. The architects were John Petch & son of Scarborough, an established practice in the town. The architect's perspective of the church hangs in the church hall. Pevsner gives the architect as Dom E Roulan (*sic*). Father Eugene Roulin, a French Benedictine monk, was the first resident priest at Filey and designed the Catholic church there in 1905 (*q.v.*), so he may have been responsible for the initial sketch ideas for St Edward's, passed to Petch & Son to draw up and execute. The unusual window tracery is particularly reminiscent of the Filey design. In 1968 St Edward's became a parish in its own right but in 1999 it reverted to being a chapel-of-ease.

2.3 Setting

Avenue Victoria was built as a prosperous late Victorian/Edwardian suburban street with large red brick houses with tile hanging and timber framing. St Edward's stands set back and in line with the houses and is of a smaller scale, even with its short octagonal tower. The South Cliff developed as a smart suburb from the mid-19th century, but the earlier stucco terraces soon gave way to later red brick villas.

2.4 Description of the building and its principal fittings and furnishings

The church is north oriented but here references will be to liturgical compass points.

St Edward the Confessor's church is a small red brick building with minimal stone dressings and clay pantile roof, consisting of a gabled nave with a lean-to porch (1987) and a southwest tower, and a lower sanctuary. The style is Byzantine with a particularly distinctive tracery to the windows, like Middle Eastern sun screens, but probably derived from early Christian sources (*cf* Filey). The church is elevated from the street and all the show is in the (liturgical) west front. A modern porch runs the full width of the nave and is designed in the spirit of the original, with paired round-arched windows either side of the door. There was originally no entrance to the church on this side. Trio of stepped round-arched windows above embraced within a single round arch. Porch tower to the left with the original entrance with round arch and stone surround, the tympanum intricately carved. Square tower above, turning into an octagon above the nave eaves and with a tiled pyramidal roof. Small round-arched bell-openings with the same flowing tracery as used elsewhere. Decorative raised brickwork patters at the base of the octagon and in the gable of the nave. The side walls of the church are plainly treated with paired round-arched windows,

repeating the tracery design in the leading of the glazing. Plain and simple interior, an unadorned round arch separating nave from sanctuary. Functional king post roof to the nave, simply with purlins in the sanctuary. Panelled dado throughout. Oak pews, probably original. Stone altar with relief carving of grazing reindeer, inscribed 'Fons Vitae', fountain of life. Low stone reredos against the wall behind with a Romanesque-arched tabernacle. Panelled canopy suspended above. Timber nave gallery on octagonal columns with cushion-shaped capitals, its front treated with the same pierced patterned tracery as elsewhere. Stations of the Cross of strong character, solid rectangular wooden panels with the scenes carved (adzed) in relief.